

1. The timely submission filed on 4-19-04 is not fully responsive to the prior Office action because, in the confusion of the reconstructed record, the Examiner is unable to positively find the set of claims which are currently subject to examination. The apparent last reply to an Office Action argues that claims 1-3, 5-14, 16-25 and 27-31 are pending (and should be allowed). Since the Examiner cannot find a set of claims currently in the case matching this description, Applicant should submit a copy of the claims that are clearly intended for a current examination on the merits. Since the submission appears to be a bona fide attempt to provide a complete reply to the prior Office action, applicant is given a shortened statutory period of three (3) months from the mailing date of this letter, whichever is longer, to submit a complete reply.

2. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to J. Woodrow Eldred whose telephone number is (571)272-6901. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Thursday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Carone can be reached on 571-272-6873. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/J. Woodrow Eldred/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3641

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